full chapter related to their rights in the Protection of Plant Varieties in the Farmers Rights Bill, 1999; and

(b) if so, the reaction of Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SBPB K SATYANARAYANA RAO): (a) and (b) The Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers' Rights Bill, 1999 prepared by the Department of Agriculture & Cooperation was introduced in the Lok Sabha on 14.12.1999. The Bill has now been referred to a Joint Committee of the Houses on the Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers' Rights Bill, 1999. The Committee has received suggestions from farmers/groups of farmers and representatives of various organisations for a separate chapter on "Farmers' Rights in the protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers' Rights Bill, 1999 to safeguard the interest of farmers.

Agricultural credit

4900. DR. ALLADI P. RAJKUMAR: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether farmers get adequate and timely credit to raise their crop;

(b) if so, the instructions issued in this regard; and

(c) the measures taken to ensure that such farmers do not face hardship for receiving credits?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SBPBK SATYANARAYANA RAO): (a) to (c) Under the existing Crop Loan System of lending to the farmers, loans are provided on the basis of scale of finance for different crops which are fixed after taking into account all the requirements *i.e.* cost of cultivation, variations in climatic conditions etc. In order to provide adequate credit to the farmers, domestic scheduled commercial banks are required to lend 18% of net bank credit for agriculture sector. Further, the commercial banks have been advised by the RBI to introduce Special Agricultural Credit plan (SCAP) since 1994-95.

For ensuring the flow of timely and adequate credit to the farmers and removing the hardship in receiving credit, a number of steps have been taken as indicated below:

— Most of the recommendations of High Level Committee (R.V. Gupta Committee) on agricultural credit which include simplification of

procedures, greater flexibility and discretion to banks in the matter of collateral/margin security, dispensing with "No Dues Certificate" cash disbursement of loans, introduction of new loan products with savings component etc. have been implemented;

— Extension of cash credit facility for meeting composite credit needs of farmers;

— Introduction of Kisan Credit Cards aimed at providing timely and adequate credit support from the banking system to the farmers for their cultivation needs;

— Liberalization of guidelines in regard to requirement of collateral security, norms for minimum recovery and minimum involvement etc.

— Banks have been advised by the RBI to open specialized agricultural branches to take care of financing of high tech agricultural projects.

Egg Processing Industry

4901. SHRI R.S. GAVAI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the domestic egg processing industry are facing crisis;

(b) if so, the factual position in this regard;

(c) whether the two egg powder plants have already been referred to BIFR;

(d) whether Government propose to give subsidy for every Kg. of egg powder exported;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) steps proposed for revival of egg processing industry in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SYED SHAHANAWAZ HUSSAIN): (a) to (f) An egg powder plants of M/s. Western Foods Ltd., 341-342, Sector-35B, Chandigarh has been registered with the Board for Industrial and Financial Reconstruction (BIFR) in August, 1999. The Government has initiated Plan Schemes for the Development/Improvement of the Poultry and Egg Processing industries for both domestic and export